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<http://webpages.charter.net/ps4fs/Shawls>

PS4FS Monthly Newsletter - May 2011:

Dear PS4FS friends,

Our newsletter is now predominantly about Dover! The good news is Chaplain Wallace tells us Dover numbers were down in February and March – let's pray it continues! Read his comments are in the newsletter! I think "Someone" upstairs is watching over us, because just as we lost our Army casualty list, I received a request from Robin Raine, Chief of Dover's Families of the Fallen Support Branch. Robin wants to get the word out to Air Force families about our program, and have them contact us directly for requests! This would again allow us to fulfill direct requests which is wonderful! Full details are in our newsletter!

Last-call reminder that Vicky Gallo and Janet Bristow of the Shawl Ministry are still looking for submissions for the Shawl Ministry's 3rd book with Taunton Press, calling for original prayer shawl patterns, inspiring stories, prayers, and blessings. Deadline date has been extended to May 15th. See the newsletter for details.

It cannot be repeated enough times: thank you all for your passionate support of this ministry. We run like a well-oiled machine! All of you inspire me more than you know! Together, we've accomplished something very beautiful, making others' lives a little bit better - that's all we can ask for! Thank you for being here, thank you for your gifts, thank you for being you!

I urge you to especially pay attention to the last story in this issue – which asks for donations to aid military servicemen's phone calls from overseas. Blessings to you all!

Note: If you prefer to be removed from this list, please notify me.

<http://webpages.charter.net/ps4fs/Shawls/>

Fondly,

Cozette

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I.) INFO:

1.) CURRENT STATISTICS:

# Prayer Shawls made since October 2007:	4,609	<i>Includes Dover prayer shawls (numbers below)</i>
# sent to Dover since inception of program:	1,605	
# sent to Dover this past month:	91	
# Prayer Shawl Groups/Individuals:	264	

*A Warm Welcome to New Groups/Individuals who Joined PS4FS in May 2011

Contact Name	Town	State	Group Name	Date Joined
Barbara Heap	Pompton Lakes	NJ	St. Mary's Parish	4/23/11
Cindi Nasveschuk	Rutland	VT		4/26/11

2.) COMMUNICATIONS FROM YOU

Vicky Gallo and Janet Bristow of the Shawl Ministry have extended the date for their third “Prayer Shawl Companion” book to May 15th. I am aware of a few of you who are submitting patterns. I am submitting the story of our own ministry! If you have a pattern, a poem, or an inspiring story, please consider submitting for this wonderful book. According to their website:

In our travels, we have seen some fantastic designs. The shawls were made with all types of yarns like recycled silk from sari's, hand-dyed and hand-spun wool, as well as merino wool, cashmere, angora, and mohair. We have also seen colorful shawls made with several types of acrylic yarns blended together and the organic blends of bamboo, corn, soy and milk fibers. Sometimes different types of micro-fiber fashion yarns such as eye-lash, blended boucle, ribbon, lattice, and multicolored thick and thin milled yarns were added to the body of the shawl. Going beyond the obvious, think of recycling with yarns from previously knitted sweaters, or yarn made from strips of old tee shirts. Adorn or embellish your shawls with beads, charms, religious or spiritual medals, shells, ribbons, bells, buttons, etc. for an added dimension. We invite you to be as creative as your imagination allows.

For those of you who are inspired by simplicity and prayerfulness, we invite you to incorporate the symbolism of color, number combinations of stitches, etc. not unlike the original Prayer Shawl Pattern of K3, P3. To enter into the prayerful process, sit quietly with yarn and knitting needles and see what Spirit inspires. Keep a journal as you go to record not only the pattern, but your thoughts, inspirations, and insights, as well. Pay attention to any symbolism or connections you feel.

Original stories or prayers may include:

- *Insights/thoughts/inspirations you'd like to share*
- *A story about giving and/or receiving a shawl*
- *A prayer, blessing, or a poem that unfolds from your experience*
- *A favorite quote, with its source that applies to knitting, shawls, etc.*

Please visit their website for more information! Deadline is May 15th

http://www.shawlministry.com/Call/Book3/call_intro_book3.htm

3.) DOVER PROGRAM

Army Chaplain Chuck Wallace sends us an update on how things are going at Dover Air Base:

I have given out 15 prayer shawls for February and March. February was a very slow month thankfully. March was somewhat busier. We'll see how April goes. Usually as the weather warms, things get busy. Of course I am praying that is not the case this year.

I know you often do not get to hear the stories from families but this month several families mentioned how honored they felt receiving a prayer shawl. Knowing that someone took the time to make such beautiful shawls and send them here to comfort families gave pause for more than a few families while they were here. It's easy to purchase something and give that item to someone, it's another level of commitment to labor while creating something and then give it away. Again, PS4FS participants, thank you for all you do! Your work does make a difference to the families!

CH (MAJ) Chuck Wallace

On another note, we've had a timely request from the Dover's Air Force Robin Raine, the Chief of that base's Families of the Fallen Support Branch. Robin wants to spread the word to Air Force families to contact us for prayer shawls! Now that we no longer receive the Army's casualty list, this is a wonderful way to get the job done all by ourselves! As in the past, when requests from Air Force families come in, I'll contact those of you in the same state, and whoever responds first will receive the information! Robin writes:

Thank you for always including me on your distribution, I enjoy reading your newsletters. I'm sure it is frustrating not to have the family info supplied to you, but I'm sure you know that privacy is paramount for our families of the fallen. You're probably not aware, but my branch has just passed its 1-year anniversary for our Air Force Families Forever program. Within this program we have a Family Support Network which we've established to connect families who have lost an airman. Every quarter, we distribute an electronic newsletter with info, contributions from families, and resources. I wanted to propose to you/your group that we could list your organization if AF family members wanted to contact you for a prayer shawl. Not sure if you're interested, since this is exclusively an Air Force network, but I thought I would pose that to you.

Just two weeks ago there were two little girls, 7 & 3, who both picked out prayer shawls that we keep in the Meditation Pavilion near the Fisher House for Families of the Fallen (we also keep another rack in the Center for Families of the Fallen, on the same campus). They were so sweet - they wore their shawls all afternoon and evening and even selected one each for mom and grandma, who were here for their fallen soldier son/husband. Next time I'm over there I'll try and remember to get a picture of how the shawls are displayed.

Thanks so much again for what you do. Please feel free to visit our link to get a better picture of where your shawls are going:

<http://www.mortuary.af.mil/library/familiesofthefallensupportbranch/index.asp>

Best, Robin

I strongly encourage each of you to visit the above link as it shows photos of The Fisher House, a photo of Robin and the staff there, the living/waiting room where families wait before going out to witness the Dignified Transfer Ceremony, and much more! Many of you gave donations for this worthy project; enjoy the photos! My favorite is one of Robin placing what looks like a prayer shawl over the back of a chair.

One January 7th, PS4FS knitter/crocheter Becky Bowers and many of her group, the Belmont Baptist Church, in Charlottesville, Virginia, once again traveled to Dover Air Base to hand deliver their lovely prayer shawls and take photos for us to enjoy. Becky's photos are of the Fisher House, the Meditation Garden, her group, and the chaplains and Robin Raine. Enjoy, once again, Becky's photos from this trip. She tells us:

There are actually three buildings for the fallen soldiers' ministry:

1. The Center for the Families of the Fallen,
2. a meditation building in which houses Chaplain Wallace's Office, with a beautiful meditation garden outside, and
3. The Fisher House.

We had a wonderful but humbling trip to Dover and anticipate returning to Dover in the spring to deliver additional shawls. We were unable to visit the Fisher House as there were families there on the day we went. Thank you for allowing Belmont to serve alongside you in your Prayer Shawls for Fallen Soldiers vision. May God continue to bless you. Becky Bowers



Note: Above 2 photos appeared in the March newsletter, but are being shown again due to the recent activity with Dover. Above left - from L-R: Chaplain Jensen (Army), Robin Raine (Chief, Families of the Fallen Support Group), Chaplain Wallace (Army) and Chaplain Rowley (Navy) Above right - from L-R: Front Row - Crystal Cochran, Martha Lynch, Becky Bowers, Bill Sampson and Robin Raine. Back Row - Chaplains Rowley and Wallace, Willie Bowers and Braton Newman.

Below and on next page: photos Becky took around the Fisher House and Meditation Garden. Becky writes: Maybe when we go back this spring to deliver more shawls we will get to see the Fisher House. The Meditation Garden is outside of the Meditation Building. The shawls are displayed in the Meditation Building and the families go here prior to going out on the tarmac. In this building, the children are given a book titled "Tear Soup". We stopped at a bookstore on the way home to Virginia and purchased a copy of it. It is a great book if anyone is interested in it.



Here is a website that you and the other PS4FS group might want to visit as it has a video of the Fisher House Dedication. The web site also has videos of dignified transfers and they are heartbreaking but humbling experience watching the videos. Look in the video section of the website <http://www.mortuary.af.mil/>. This website also has information on the Center for the Families of the Fallen. This website really brings home why the PS4FS Ministry is so important. Thank you again for all you do to keep our fallen soldiers memories alive to us. Becky (2 photos next page)



PS4FS knitter/crocheter Susan Shedd, who works with the St. Denis Prayer Shawl Ministry in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, sent a lovely comment about the Dover Program you might enjoy:
Thanks for keeping the program alive. It continues to amaze me how such a simple gesture can bring such peace and comfort to so many people! May you continue to be strengthened in this beautiful ministry, Susan and the St. Denis Prayer Shawl Ministry

PS4FS knitter/crocheter Jean Lloyd, who heads the Clare Prayer Shawl Ministry at the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City, Maryland, wrote such a lovely note about the Dover Program, I just HAD to share it with you. When Jean says “you”, if truly feel it should be “we” as we have all done this together:
As long as the families get the shawls and are comforted by them, you have done your job. You did an incredible feat and have given such comforted in a time of need. You should feel good about what you did ~ Dover is doing what you started and for that we are all grateful. Life keeps going and keeps changing and we can only hope it is for the good of all!!!!

What you did was a tribute to the unsung hero's ~ I remember feeling by seeing the faces and knowing the names it made a horrific event better ~ it was a way of keeping them alive and in our memories. Yes, it was nice to know who we touched, but we know how we touched them and as long as they receive a beautiful shawl when going to take their loved one home, WE have done our job. So take a bow and all us behind you are so proud for our extended family ~ our soldiers who are fighting for OUR FREEDOM ~ so let it FREEDOM ring!!!!

II. THANK YOU NOTES, NPC RESPONSES, AND MESSAGES:



PS4FS knitter/crocheter Janet Shott, who heads the Palmdale United Methodist Church’s prayer shawl group in sunny Palmdale, California, received a lengthy and heartfelt letter from a Dover relative. Lynn Cuzzupe-Petz is the aunt of PFC Paul Orazio Cuzzupe II, DOD 8/8/10. I believe the family lives in Plant City, Florida. (With the abbreviated Army casualty list, we have far less name/address information.) We thank Alma Stein of the Palmdale group for her knitted prayers in this prayer shawl! Lynne addresses her letter to the church’s pastor: *(1 photo left, 1 right)*

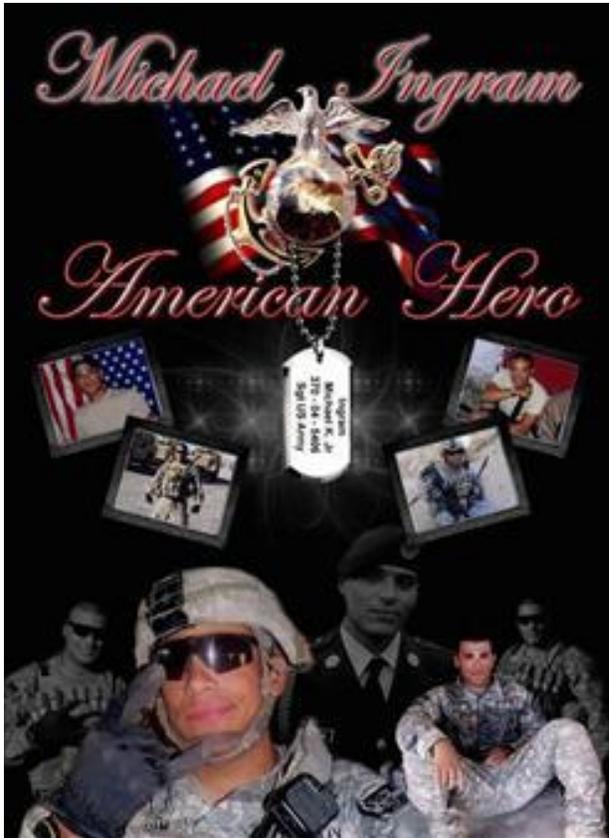
Letter to Rev. Powell, Pastor at United Methodist Church, Palmdale, California: Good afternoon Reverend Powell, A week ago my family and I were struck with the tragic news that we lost our loved one in Afghanistan due to his encounter with an IED. He was my cousin, his name: PFC (Medic) Paul Orazio Cuzzupe II, of the United States Army. Paul was a compassionate, caring young man of 23 years, and had been serving in Afghanistan for two months. Ironically, just three days prior to his death, Paul tried to save the life of a 9-year-old



Afghanistan boy who was also a victim of an IED. On the night of the return of his remains to Dover, Delaware, the Army Chaplains presented the family (and the families of 5 other soldiers) with prayer shawls that had been made throughout our nation - I received one that was knitted by Alma Stein of your congregation. It's odd how the simplest of material things in this world mean so much sometimes. When I accepted the shawl

and wrapped it around me, it was as if Ms. Stein had reached out and took me in her arms when I needed to be hugged the most. The remains of six soldiers were removed from the jet deemed "Angel Wings" in the Dignified Transfer Ceremony at 1:15 in the morning. It was a heart-wrenching, respectful, reverent, and extremely emotional event - one that I pray this nation's families will not have to endure. Please, Sir, will you tell Ms. Stein that her shawl was such a comfort to me on that dreadful night! It helped soothe me on our long trip back to New Jersey as I remained wrapped in it and rested. I thank her for both her prayers and her shawl, from the bottom of my heart. It is a wonderful thing that these caring parishioners do for the families of fallen soldiers. I thank her for her support when I needed it and the long, distant hugs. I use it still. I can tell you from observance, the night that the distraught families accepted them, the prayer shawls brought comfort to all. God bless this group that reaches out to strangers! Sincerely, Lynn Cuzupe-Petz

PS4FS knitter/crocheter Becky Bowers, who heads the Belmont Baptist Church's prayer shawl group in Charlottesville, Virginia, includes a photo of Cpl. Johnathan W. Taylor, DOD 2/22/11. She received a thank you note from Johnathan's cousin (I do not have the cousin's name) for having chosen a prayer shawl while at Dover Air Base. (1 photo, right)



In the past year, we've had few direct requests, but we did receive one from Julie and Michael Ingram, proud parents of Cpl Michael Keith Ingram, DOD 4/17/2010. Julie and Michael live in Newport, Michigan. As usual, all our members from that state were contacted, and the first to respond was given this family's name. Thank you to PS4FS knitter/crocheter Barb Long from Ada, Michigan, for volunteering to send two loving prayer shawl to this family!

(Photos: 3 on this page, 3 additional photos and interesting story on next page)

Below is photo of Michael with his parents, Julie and Michael Sr., on right is the father





As you can see from the photos, this is a very special family. Julie tells us they began a website in honor of their son – she writes:

Thank you so much. Please check out our website - we have started a non-profit foundation in honor of Mikie to send calling cards to our troops so they may call home. Mikie always complained about how he had to pay to call home while he is fighting for his life. So we had to do something! Thank you for spreading the word on "Mikies Minutes". Below is the web address:

www.mikiesminutes.com

Contributions are made at this website, allowing our military heroes to call home. I urge you to donate to this wonderful cause, and spread the word! What a great way to honor their son! The website has a tearful video of Mike's funeral procession, and also describes the need for donations as follows:

Mikie's Minutes™ is a program that connects US soldiers serving in the field with loved ones at home. Established to honor Sergeant Michael Ingram Jr., a fallen hero of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, Mikie's Minutes is privately funded and only made possible through your generous contributions. Find out how you can help connect with a hero.

Checks or money orders are accepted at the following address, or you may use a credit card on line:

Mikie's Minutes™ Fund
28345 Beck Road
Suite 404
Wixom, MI 48393